

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An imaging apparatus, comprising:  
a flash for emitting light onto an object[[,]];  
an image pickup device formed from a plurality of pixels, each of which can perform any of an exposure operation and a reading operation thereof at a timing different from that of the other[[,]];  
a detector circuit for detecting a brightness of image information formed by the image pickup device, and  
a control circuit for controlling operations of the image pickup device and of the detector circuit, ~~said imaging apparatus characterized in that:~~ said control circuit ~~causes~~ causing the flash to fire a preflash before a main-flashing operation by the flash, ~~causes~~ causing the image pickup device to form an image at the time of the preflash, and ~~causes~~ causing the detector circuit to detect the brightness of image information formed at the time of the preflash, to compute an amount of main-flashing light to be fired by said flash on the basis of the detected brightness of the image information formed at the time of the preflash, [[; and]] said control circuit ~~causes~~ starting the exposure operation simultaneously for all the pixels of said image pickup device at the time of the preflash by said flash, whereby to form the image at the time of the preflash.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The imaging apparatus as described in claim 1, ~~characterized in that:~~ said apparatus further comprises comprising:  
a memory unit for storing image information formed by said image pickup device before a pre-flashing operation by the flash; and

when said pickup device starts a during-preflash exposure operation, said control circuit causes said pickup device to read the image information which have been stored in said memory unit, instead of an image to be formed by said image pickup device at the time of the preflash, and outputs the read image information to on a downstream image recording apparatus or image output apparatus.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An imaging apparatus, comprising:

a flash for emitting light onto an object[[],];

an image pickup device formed from a plurality of pixels, each of which can perform any of an exposure operation and a reading operation thereof at a timing different from that of the other,

a detector circuit for detecting a brightness of image information formed by the image pickup device[[],]; and

a control circuit for controlling operations of the image pickup device and of the detector circuit, ~~said imaging apparatus characterized in that:~~ said control circuit causes causing the flash to fire a preflash before a main-flashing operation by the flash, causes causing the image pickup device to form an image at the time of the preflash, causes causing the detector circuit to detect the brightness of image information formed at the time of the preflash, causes causing the image pickup device to form a before-preflash image with said flash not fired before the preflash operation by said flash, and causes causing the detector circuit to detect the brightness of image information formed before the preflash, to compute a differential value obtained from the brightness of image information formed before the preflash and the brightness of image information formed during the preflash respectively detected by said detector circuit, and compute an amount of main-flashing light to be fired by the flash on the basis of the computed differential value; [[and]]

wherein said control circuit causes starting the exposure operation simultaneously for all the pixels of said image pickup device before a preflash operation and during a preflash operation by said flash, whereby to form the images before the preflash operation and during the preflash operation.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The imaging apparatus as described in claim 3, ~~characterized in that: said apparatus further comprises comprising~~ a memory unit for storing image information formed by said image pickup device before said image pickup device forms an image before the preflash; and

when said pickup device starts a before-preflash exposure operation, said control circuit causes said pickup device to read the image information which have been stored in said memory unit, instead of images to be formed by said image pickup device before the preflash and during the preflash, and outputs the read image information to ~~a downstream on~~ image recording apparatus or image output apparatus.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The imaging apparatus as described in claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said image pickup device comprises an XY addressable image sensor.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The imaging apparatus as described in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said XY addressable image sensor comprises a CMOS image sensor.